

July 2, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Peace of Christ,

Thank you for sending in your updated e-mail addresses as you responded to this year's Time-Talent-Treasure mailing. When so many e-mails bounced back in our last e-blast awhile back, we determined that this was not the best way to get up-to-the-minute news about the parish to our parishioners. Our regular updating of our web site and Facebook pages got the word out on updates as soon as they happened and seemed to be reaching a much wider audience. I know that in the time since mid-March, many watched our daily Mass posted online and accompanied by a 2-paragraph message from myself (it was like typing a new bulletin cover every day of the week!), and I am glad that this method of communication worked so well. However, in recent weeks we have heard from those who do not have computers or smart phones to access these items.

So, with updated e-mail addresses now entered into our system, I send this message to you by e-mail. We have been open for three weeks for weekday Masses in our three churches and this has worked very well safety-wise for those who have been attending: masks are worn, sanitizer is available, and social-distancing is practiced at each site. Now we are ready to re-open for weekend Masses and Confessions starting this weekend. The regular schedule will be observed. For Masses: Saturday 4:30 P.M. at St. James; Sunday 8:00 A.M. at St. James, 9:00 A.M. at St. John's, 9:45 A.M. at St. Ambrose, 11:00 A.M. at St. John's, and 5:00 P.M. at St. Ambrose. For Confessions: Saturday 3:45-4:15 P.M. at St. James; Sunday 8:15-8:45 A.M. at St. John's, 4:15-4:45 P.M. at St. Ambrose. When you arrive at church, please place any offerings in the new boxes at the head of each main aisle as no collection baskets will be passed (if you still have your Operation Rice Bowl contribution containers from Lent, place them in the baskets up near the altar). Also, we are refraining from singing, holding hands at the Our Father, and giving the Kiss of Peace until further notice. Bulletins will be available as you exit, as we are keeping all books and papers out of the pews for ease of inter-service sanitation. Everything else should be pretty much the same, and we will so much look forward to seeing people instead of a webcam staring back at us from the pews!

Two final points. Now that we are back in church, posting of Masses online will not be available, as it requires equipment to be set up between the altar and the people. We are looking into equipment that can be installed to unobtrusively livestream Masses as they are being celebrated, but we have to raise funds for such an installation. The price as quoted to me is \$26,889.73. We already have 4 individuals who have designated \$6,300 toward this. The quote is good for a month, and one-half is due as a deposit. So, I leave it to you. Many have gotten used to having our Masses available online, especially those who are permanently homebound, as well as snowbirds who watched while they were away and others who moved elsewhere over the years but like to watch us back home. There are also some who are just not feeling safe enough yet to return, so this would serve them quite well both now and at any times of sickness (or snowstorms) in the future.

Secondly, a big congratulations to our parish school community. One thing we have shown as a parish school is that we know how to stay in session even when a pandemic requires daily teaching to be done remotely. Indeed, as a parish, this is our second time around pandemic-wise: Our school at St. John the Evangelist opened in 1916 two years before the pandemic of 1918. Our school at St. Ambrose has been open since 1923, so our 100th anniversary there is only a couple years away. Our classrooms are large and our class sizes are small, so social distancing is very doable when we re-open for in-school sessions. That said, now is the time to get all registrations in for the Fall. We were ahead in the registration process before all schools closed in mid-March, but the closing brought that to a pause. So, if you have children from 3-year old Pre-Schoolers to 5th graders and want to register them for a school that will be safe if open and remain in-session if ever temporarily closed again in the future, please call the school at 288-0580 and/or check their web site at saadcs@dor.org and their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/saadcsdor/. Relatedly, this is also a good time for any donations toward the school or toward any of its scholarships to be made. This can be done via the red "Donate Today" button on our parish web site at www.peaceofchristparish.org or by calling the parish office at 288-5000, ext. 117.

Looking forward to seeing you soon. God's blessings on one and all!

--Fr. Robert Schrader, Pastor